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MAILED

JUN 09 2011

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of :
Le Roy et al. : DECISION ON PETITION
Application Number: 10/583,844 :
Filing Date: 06/22/2006 :
Attorney Docket Number: :
PF030184 :

This is a decision on the petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a) filed on April 20, 2011.

The petition is **dismissed**.

Any request for reconsideration of this decision must be submitted within **TWO (2) MONTHS** from the mail date of this decision. Extensions of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) are permitted. The reconsideration request should include a cover letter entitled "Renewed Petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a)," or, as described below, under 37 CFR 1.137(b).

The application became abandoned on December 1, 2010, for failure to timely submit a reply to the non-final Office action mailed on August 31, 2010, which set a three (3) month shortened statutory period for reply. No extensions of the time for reply in accordance with 37 CFR 1.136(a) were obtained. Notice of Abandonment was mailed on March 29, 2011.

The first page of the petition is illegible. Specifically, it appears that an error occurred when the petition was faxed to the Office which resulted in the first page being obscured. A new

copy of the petition form should be submitted with any renewed petition.

A grantable petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a) must be accompanied by:

(1) the required reply, unless previously filed; In a nonprovisional application abandoned for failure to prosecute, the required reply may be met by the filing of a continuing application. In a nonprovisional utility or plant application filed on or after June 8, 1995, and abandoned for failure to prosecute, the required reply may also be met by the filing of a request for continued examination in compliance with § 1.114. In an application or patent, abandoned or lapsed for failure to pay the issue fee or any portion thereof, the required reply must be the payment of the issue fee or any outstanding balance thereof.

In an application abandoned for failure to pay the publication fee, the required reply must include payment of the publication fee.

(2) the petition fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(1);

(3) a showing to the satisfaction of the Director that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(a) was unavoidable; and

(4) any terminal disclaimer (and fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.20(d)) required pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(c)).

The petition lacks item (3).

With regards to item (3), the Director may revive an abandoned application if the delay in responding to the relevant outstanding Office requirement is shown to the satisfaction of the Director to be "unavoidable".¹ Decisions on reviving abandoned applications on the basis of "unavoidable" delay have adopted the reasonably prudent person standard in determining if the delay was unavoidable:

The word 'unavoidable' . . . is applicable to ordinary human affairs, and requires no more or greater care or diligence than is generally used and observed by prudent and careful men in relation to their most important business. It permits them in the exercise of this care to rely upon the ordinary and trustworthy agencies of mail and telegraph, worthy and reliable employees, and such other means and instrumentalities

¹ 35 U.S.C. § 133.

as are usually employed in such important business. If unexpectedly, or through the unforeseen fault or imperfection of these agencies and instrumentalities, there occurs a failure, it may properly be said to be unavoidable, all other conditions of promptness in its rectification being present.²

The showing of record is inadequate to establish unavoidable delay within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. § 133 and 37 CFR 1.137(a).⁵ Specifically, an application is "unavoidably" abandoned only where petitioner, or counsel for petitioner, takes all action necessary for a proper response to the outstanding Office action, but through the intervention of unforeseen circumstances, such as failure of mail, telegraph, facsimile, or the negligence of otherwise reliable employees, the response is not timely received in the Office.³

Petitioner has provided no explanation as to why the delay should be considered unavoidable. In the absence of an adequate explanation as to why the delay should be considered unavoidable, the petition must be dismissed. Any renewed petition must include a documented showing explaining why the entire period of the delay, from the date a reply was due until the date a grantable petition was filed, was unavoidable.

As petitioner has not provided the requisite showing of unavoidable delay, the petition must be dismissed.

ALTERNATIVE VENUE

Petitioner may wish to consider filing a renewed petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b), which now provides that where the delay in reply was unintentional, a petition may be filed to revive an abandoned application or a lapsed patent pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b). A

² In re Mattullath, 38 App. D.C. 497, 514-15 (1912) (quoting Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 31, 32-33 (1887)); see also Winkler v. Ladd, 221 F. Supp. 550, 552, 138 USPQ 666, 167-68 (D.D.C. 1963), aff'd, 143 USPQ 172 (D.C. Cir. 1963); Ex parte Henrich, 1913 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 139, 141 (1913). In addition, decisions on revival are made on a "case-by-case basis, taking all the facts and circumstances into account." Smith v. Mossinghoff, 671 F.2d 533, 538, 213 USPQ 977, 982 (D.C. Cir. 1982). Finally, a petition cannot be granted where a petitioner has failed to meet his or her burden of establishing that the delay was "unavoidable." Haines v. Quigg, 673 F. Supp. 314, 316-17, 5 USPQ2d 1130, 1131-32 (N.D. Ind. 1987).

³ Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 31 (Comm'r Pat. 1887).

grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b) must be accompanied by:

- (1) the required reply, unless previously filed. In a nonprovisional application abandoned for failure to prosecute, the required reply may be met by the filing of a continuing application. In a nonprovisional utility or plant application filed on or after June 8, 1995, and abandoned for failure to prosecute, the required reply may also be met by the filing of a request for continued examination in compliance with § 1.114. In an application or patent, abandoned or lapsed for failure to pay the issue fee or any portion thereof, the required reply must be the payment of the issue fee or any outstanding balance thereof. In an application, abandoned for failure to pay the publication fee, the required reply must include payment of the publication fee.
- (2) the petition fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(m);
- (3) a statement that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b) was unintentional. The Director may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional; and
- (4) any terminal disclaimer (and fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.20(d)) required pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(c)).

The filing of a petition under the unintentional standard cannot be intentionally delayed and therefore should be filed promptly. A person seeking revival due to unintentional delay cannot make a statement that the delay was unintentional unless the entire delay, including the delay from the date it was discovered that the application was abandoned until the filing of the petition to revive under 37 CFR 1.137(b), was unintentional. A statement that the delay was unintentional is not appropriate if petitioner intentionally delayed the filing of a petition for revival under 37 CFR 1.137(b).

Should petitioners decide to file a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b), the petition fee due is currently \$1,620.00 (\$810.00 for a small entity).⁴

An extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136 must be filed prior to the expiration of the maximum extendable period for reply.⁵ The

⁴ As Office fees are revised from time-to-time, petitioner is encouraged to check the USPTO website at www.uspto.gov for current fee amounts prior to submission of any petition. Alternatively, petitioner may contact the Office by phone at 1-800-PTO-9199 for fee information.

⁵ See In re Application of S., 8 USPQ2d 1630, 1631 (Comm'r Pats. 1988).

three (3)-month extension request filed on April 20, 2011, was submitted more than three (3) months after the end of the period for reply to the non-final Office action mailed on August 31, 2010, and therefore is unnecessary. The extension of time fee paid on April 20, 2011, will be refunded to counsel.

A copy of the form for filing a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) to revive an application unintentionally abandoned is enclosed herewith for petitioner's convenience.

The address in the petition is different from the correspondence address. A courtesy copy of this decision will be mailed to the address in the petition. All future correspondence, however, will be mailed solely to the address of record. A change of correspondence address should be filed if the correspondence address needs to be changed.

Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

By mail: Mail Stop Petition
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

By FAX: (571) 273-8300
Attn: Office of Petitions

By hand: Customer Service Window
Mail Stop Petition
Randolph Building
401 Dulany Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

A reply may also be filed via EFS-Web.

Telephone inquiries concerning this matter may be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3231.

D Wood
Douglas I. Wood
Senior Petitions Attorney
Office of Petitions

Enclosure: Form PTO/SB/64

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